DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 331 514 IR 053 567

AUTHOR Jackson, Shirley A.
TITLE The Collection and Dissemination of Library Statistics by the National Center for Education Statistics.
INSTITUTION National Center for Education Statistics (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE Jan 91
NOTE 20p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Libraries; *Databases; *Data Collection; Elementary Secondary Education; Federal Programs; Higher Education; *Information Dissemination; Learning Resources Centers; *Library Statistics; Library Surveys; Longitudinal Studies; Public Libraries; User Needs (Information)
IDENTIFIERS *National Center for Education Statistics

ABSTRACT

It is noted that the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and libraries have a mutual mission: the collection and dissemination of information in formats that are useful to the information needs of the public. This report discusses the NCES' mission statement in these terms and describes its broad-based data gathering program, which maintains seven cross-sectional databases and three major longitudinal studies databases. Results and highlights from the surveys of academic, public, and school libraries/media centers are then provided. Ways in which NCES disseminates data to three types of data users are also described: (1) information is provided in reports, conference presentations, seminars, electronic bulletin boards (BBSs) and briefings for "passive public users," who need statistical information that describes education, shows trends or progress, and helps people understand trends in the condition of education; (2) information on the availability of raw data for manipulation is provided via catalogs, announcements, data tapes, computer disks, and BBSs for "micro-data users," who need information to analyze relationships, identify questions for future study, and/or validate preliminary research findings; and (3) information is often prepared by NCES to provide details not included in current publications for "active public users," who need statistical information to answer questions that require currently available data. Concluding the report is a list of addresses and telephone numbers of places where NCES products are available together with the titles and series numbers of recently released data tapes. (MAB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED331514

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

IR

THE COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF LIBRARY STATISTICS BY THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

Dr. Shirley A. Jackson
Associate Commissioner for Dissemination Policy
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement

Prepared for: Education Libraries, a journal of the Special Libraries Association, Education Division.

Audiences: academic libraries, State Departments of Education, education and psychology libraries, library educators, and schools of education libraries.

IR053567

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

THE COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF LIBRARY STATISTICS BY THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and libraries have a mutual mission, the collection and dissemination of information in forms and formats that are useful to the diverse publics seeking the information. NCES collects statistics on the condition of education in the United States, analyzes and reports the meaning and significance of these statistics, and assists States and local education agencies in improving their statistical systems. The mission of NCES is the same one given the U.S. Department of Education when it was established by an act of Congress in 1867 for the purpose of

> collecting such statistics and facts as shall show the condition and progress of education in the several states and territories, and of diffusing information as shall aid in the establishment and maintenance of efficient school systems and otherwise promote the cause of education throughout the country. (14 Stat.L. 434,39th Congress, 1867).

The NCES mission, as mandated by law, is that NCES shall collect, collate, and from time to time, report full and complete statistics on the condition of education in the United States; conduct and publish reports on specialized analyses of the meaning and significance of such statistics [Section 406(b) of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1221e-1)].

In response to the congressional mandate, NCES has developed plans and programs to "...acquire and diffuse among the people of the United States useful statistical information on subjects connected with education (in the most general and comprehensive sense of the word) particularly the retention of students, the assessment of their progress, the financing of institutions of education, financial aid to students, the supply of and demand for teachers and other school personnel, libraries, comparisons of the education of the United States and foreign nations and the means of promoting material, social, and intellectual prosperity through education." (GEPA Section 406 (e) (4).)

Major NCES Databases

NCES has been assigned the unique mission of gathering statistics in order to report on the condition and progress of all of American education. To accomplish this mission, NCES has initiated a broad-based data gathering program that makes use of administrative records from schools, colleges, libraries, proprietary institutions; with sample surveys of institutions and

individuals; and of knowledge/skill assessments of individual achievement. The data sets are large (so they can be analyzed in a variety of ways) and frequently linked (or linkable) so they will sustain more elaborate analyses.

The Center's fiscal 1990 program, funded at approximately $40 million, maintains seven cross-sectional databases: at the elementary and secondary level, the Common Core of Data and the School and Staffing Survey; and, at the postsecondary level, the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, the National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey, the Recent College Graduates Survey, the National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty, and the Survey of Earned Doctorates Awarded in the United States. Two new surveys have been planned, the Private School Survey and the National Household Education Survey. These data bases are used as the principle data sources of The Condition of Education, Digest of Education Statistics, and Projections of Education Statistics.

The Center maintains three major longitudinal studies databases: at the elementary and secondary levels the National Longitudinal Study of 1972, High School and Beyond, and National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988; and, at the postsecondary level two new longitudinal studies are being planned, the Beginning Postsecondary Students, initiated 1989-90 and Baccalaureate and Beyond, planned for implementation during 1994.

In addition, national student achievement measures are collected through the National Assessment of Educational Progress and the Fast Response Survey System provides data within 1 year on current policy issues.

Descriptions of all of the NCES databases are included in Plans and Programs of the National Center for Education Statistics - 1990 Edition.

Major NCES Libraries Databases

PL 100-297, the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988 gave NCES specific authority to collect data and report on the condition of American libraries. In addition to collecting and disseminating data that report on the "state of health" of libraries, NCES library statistics provide a basis for identifying changes in the conditions of libraries--use, staffing patterns, services, operations, resources/expenditures, location, and collections.

The Center conducts routine data collections on the three types of libraries mentioned in the legislation--public, academic, and school media centers--and also conducts special studies. The major vehicle for collecting data about libraries are surveys. Generally, there is a two-phase process for carrying out surveys. (1) After research of the subject and consultation with the field about data needs, NCES staff develops a study plan in the format required for a Request for Proposal (RFP). The RFP

is published in the Commerce Business Daily so that proposals to carry out the study plan can be proposed through a competitive procurement process. Proposals are reviewed by panels of experts, and a contract for completion of the work is awarded to the most competitive proposal. (2) NCES staff monitors the contractors to ensure that the provisions of the contract are being met in ways that will yield high quality data. On completion of the data collection effort, a final report is prepared by the contractor. Sometimes NCES staff, working with contractors, will develop analysis and technical reports based on a survey data collection.

To conduct the Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) survey, NCES transfers funds to the National Commission on Libraries and Information Services (NCLIS) and works cooperatively with them in carrying out the survey plan.

PUBLIC LIBRARY STATISTICS

PL 100-297 mandates the annual collection of public library data, stating

> The Center, with the assistance of state library agencies, shall develop and support a cooperative system of annual data collection for public libraries. Participation shall be voluntary; however, all States shall be encouraged to join the system. Attention

should be given to insuring timely, consistent, and accurate reporting.

An action plan for a new Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data was developed by a task force that had its first meeting on September 30, 1988. The task force was composed of representatives from NCES, the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS), the Library Programs Office of the U.S. Department of Education, library associations, and State library agencies.

In 1988, 44 States and the District of Columbia participated in the FSCS' test data collection, providing data on 7,910 public libraries, approximately 88.6 percent of the unofficial total of 8,923 libraries. The remaining six States have indicated that they will repond to this annual public library survey in 1990. The system includes three major components: the Public Library Universe File, the Local Public Library Survey, and the State Library Agency Survey.

Because this was a new national data collection, there were some problems with uniformity of the data (use of definitions, editing procedures, and reporting). However, in November 1989, an NCES Working Paper, FSCS: Public Libraries in Forty-Four States and the District of Columbia: 1988, was issued. The purpose of this Working Paper was to get some preliminary data out to the people responsible for collection of the data so that data problems could be discussed and resolved. Highlights from this preliminary report include:

- Only about 10 percent of the public libraries serve populations of 50,000 or more. Almost half (45.6 percent) serve populations of less than 5,000. Libraries serving 50,000 or more had 70 percent of all branches.
- There are 3.7 full-time-equivalent public library staff for every 10,000 population. One-third of these staff are librarians; the remainder are other paid staff.
- Half (50.9 percent) of public libraries have operating expenditures of between $5 and $15 per capita population served.
- Public libraries have almost two-and-one-half books and serial volumes per capita population served. Libraries serving larger populations have larger collections but a smaller number of items per capita.
- Of all public libraries, 3 of every 10 were open less than 30 hours per week, while 2 of every 10 had more than 60 hours per week of service to the public.

In March 1990 NCES released a survey report, Services and Resources for Children in Public Libraries, 1988-89. Highlights of the data include:

- Thirty-seven percent of public library users in fall 1988 were children 14 years old and under (8th grade and below).
- The services for which public libraries most often reported moderate or heavy use by children during 1988-89 were summer reading programs (89 percent), story hour (78 percent), and readers' advisory service (72 percent).
- Public libraries offered an average of 9 group programs at the library for infants through 2-year-olds; an average of 43 group programs for 3- through 5-year-olds; an average of 25 group programs for school-age children; and, an average of 5 group programs for unspecified or combined ages of children.
- Most public libraries (83 percent) cooperated in 1988-89 with schools enrolling children 14 years old and under; 62 percent of libraries cooperated with preschools or day care centers.
- The assistance of a children's coordinator or consultant was available to 67 percent of public libraries, while over half (58 percent) of public libraries did not have any children's librarians on staff; 34 percent of libraries had only one children's librarian,

and 8 percent had two or more children's librarians on staff.

- Over three-quarters (79 percent) of libraries that serve 1,000 or more users per week had a children's librarian on staff, compared with 42 percent of libraries that serve 200-999 users per week, and only 11 percent of libraries serving less than 200 users per week. About three-quarters (73 percent) of main libraries with branches had a children's librarian on staff, compared with 39 percent of main libraries without branches and branch libraries; and
- Overall, about a third (36 percent) of public service librarians had a Master of Library Science (MLS) degree; about half (49 percent) of all children's librarians had an MLS degree.

ACADEMIC LIBRARIES STATISTICS

The most frequently surveyed libraries are in colleges and universities, surveyed every 2 or 3 years as a part of the former Higher Education General Survey (HEGIS), and now under the expanded Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), which is based on, but which supercedes HEGIS (1965-1986). IPEDS includes approximately 12,000 postsecondary institutions, whereas

HEGIS included approximately 3,500 accredited colleges and universities.

Since 1980, data have been collected from academic libraries three times (1982, 1985, and 1988). In September 1990, NCES released an E.D.TAB Publication, Academic Libraries: 1988, the most recent academic libraries data. Highlights of the data include:

- In 1988, total operating expenditures for libraries at the 3,438 institutions of higher education totaled almost $2.8 billion.
- The three largest individual expenditure items were salaries and wages, $1.5 billion (52.4 percent); current serial subscription expenditures, $0.5 billion (16.7 percent); and print material expenditures, $0.4 billion (12.7 percent).
- The libraries of the 466 doctoral-granting institutions (13.6 percent) accounted for $1.7 billion, or $3 of every $5 of the total operating expenditure dollars at all college and university libraries.
- The number of volumes held at all academic libraries at the end of fiscal year 1988 totaled almost 720 million.

- Libraries at institutions granting doctoral degrees held 430 million volumes, or 3 of every 5.
- The total number of full-time-equivalent (FTE) staff members in college and university libraries equalled 101,000, including 25,000 librarians, 34,000 student assistants, 41,000 other paid staff, and 1,000 staff who contributed their services.
- Libraries at institutions granting doctoral degrees accounted for 50,000, or half of all FTE staff at all academic libraries.
- Academic libraries had 200 million circulation transactions; 78.3 percent from the general collection, and 21.7 percent from the reserve collection.
- Libraries at institutions granting doctoral degrees accounted for more than half of this total circulation with 106 million circulation transactions.

Future academic libraries data collections are planned for two-year cycles (1990, 1992, 1994, and 1996).

PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARIES/MEDIA CENTERS

The Public School Libraries/Media Centers survey is designed to report on the condition of the nation's public and private

school libraries/media centers--how well-stocked they are, the services provided by library staff, how up-to-date their books and materials are, their physical setting, and their resources. The last survey of public school media centers was conducted in 1985. The survey collected data from a sample of 4,500 public and 1,700 private schools. For the first time, on an exploratory basis, State estimates for public school media centers were collected from a minimum of 75 schools per State. However, because of the limited sample, State estimates for some of the data items were not reliable. Data were collected on school characteristics, staff, resources/expenditures, collections, services, technology uses, and physical facilities. The next data collection will be in school year 1990-91.

NCES DISSEMINATION OF LIBRARIES DATA

Throughout the enabling legislation for the National Center for Education Statistics, there are references to "reporting" and "publishing...information and documents" on education data, and a specific requirement that the Center "issue a regular schedule of publications" (GEPA Section 406 (e) (4). The Assistant Secretary, Christopher T. Cross, issued a strong dissemination policy statement, followed by actions to ensure a "heads-up" organizational stance on effective dissemination planning and implementation of all OERI products.

The Center is committed to effective dissemination. For the purposes of matching Center products and services with

appropriate uses, the Center has identified three types of data users. The first, "passive public users," need statistical information that describes education, shows trends or progress, and helps people understand trends in the condition of education. To get the word out to "passive data users," the Center uses catalogs, announcements, "Statistics in Brief," electronic bulletin boards, descriptive, analytical, and/or technical reports, E.D. TABS (statistical tables), press releases/conferences, and briefings, seminars, and conference presentations.

The second type of data user, the "micro-data user," needs statistical information to analyze relationships, identify questions for further study, and to validate preliminary research findings using large, nationally representative data. This data user is interested in getting the raw data for manipulation (on data tapes, computer disks, CD ROM, etc). To get the word out to "micro-data users" and facilitate access to data, the Center uses catalogs, announcements, data tapes, computer disks, electronic bulletin boards, and the NCES Data Center. A contract is being let to advise the Center on the most effective technologies, ways, and means of better meeting the needs of micro-data users.

The third type of data user, the "active public user," needs statistical information to answer questions that have answers that are contained in currently available data. However, these users need someone to find the information for them. To respond to these data users, the Center must often prepare information

containing more details (or different details) than found in current publications.

How Can You Find Out What Products Are Available From NCES?

For most surveys, NCES usually releases a data tape, E.D. TABS (tables with minimal text), and a survey report of the major findings. Brief summaries of survey findings are captured in announcements, "Statistics in Brief," and "Data/Executive Summaries" for major surveys. Analysis and methodological/ technical reports are also released for some surveys. Summaries of NCES datasets are contained in annual compendia, the Digest of Education Statistics, the Condition of Education, and Projection of Education Statistics. Information about NCES data releases is routinely put on several electronic bulletin board systems, particularly the OERI Toll-Free Bulletin Board.

What, then, should you do to find out what NCES products are currently available?

1. Write or call and get the catalogs and directories of products, programs and plans. To request publications, call 1-800-424-1616 (toll free); 202-219-1651 (long distance); 626-9854 (local) or write:

U. S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
Information Services - Education Information Branch
555 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20208-5641

Current key catalogs, directories, programs and plans include:

- o Current and Forthcoming Publications-September 1989 through November 1990;
- o Programs and Plans of the National Center for Education Statistics [Series No. PAP-90, NCES No. 90668];
- o OERI Directory of Computer Data Files; and
- o Office of Educational Research and Improvement--National Center for Education Statistics Databases.

2. Use the OERI Toll-Free Bulletin Board by dialing 1-800-222-4922 (or in the metropolitan Washington, DC area, 202-626-9853, 202-219-2011, or 202-219-2012). This is a personal computer-based system designed to provide the education community with electronic access to OERI's research/statistical findings, bulletins, data tape and report announcements.

3. Use ALANET, the American Library Association (ALA) information network that is a part of the Dialcom system. NCES plans a more routine use of ALANET to put on the system selected survey findings, and data summaries from reports of interest to the library community, "blurbs" about currently available catalogs, directories, programs and plans, and library-related newly released publications and data tapes.

4. Call the OERI/Education Information number (1-800-424-1616) to ask a "real live person" how you can find the answer to your data needs.

5. Call the NCES staff responsible for library surveys regarding administrative and technical information about library surveys processing, sampling techniques, and data quality testing. Call 202-219-1354.

For computer data file technical information, call the Technology Information Branch (202-219-1547 or 219-1528).

6. Order NCES summary statistics publications from the Government Printing Office (GPO):

Superintendent of Documents
U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, DC 20402-9325

NCES major summary statistics publications include:

Digest of Education Statistics, 1989
[Series No.DIG-89; GPO Stock # 065-000-00392-9 $25.00]

The Condition of Education, 1990
Volume 1:Elementary and Secondary Education Indicators
[Series No. COE-90-1; GPO Stock # 396-1 $9.00]

The Condition of Education, 1990
Volume 2: Postsecondary Education Indicators
[Series No. COE-90-2; GPO Stock # 397-0 $9.50]

Projections of Education Statistics to 2000
[Series No. PROJ-89; GPO Stock # 065-000-00392-9 $11.00]

7. Conduct an ERIC search of Current Index to Journals in Education and Resources in Education. All NCES publications are submitted to the ERIC system.

8. For a broader look at statistical sources, consult Mary Jo Lynch's Sources of Library Statistics, 1972-82, published in 1983 by the American Library Association's (ALA) Office for Research. This publication provides background information on the nationwide collection of statistics about libraries, listing all publications with national library statistics that have been issued regularly since 1972, and describing sources of statistics on areas such as library buildings, costs, salaries, and library education.

RECENT DATA RELEASES ON LIBRARIES

Recent releases of library data by NCES have included:

TAPES

Data Tape: "Public Libraries in Forty-Five States and the District of Columbia, 1988" [Series No. DR-LIB-88/891.1; NCES No. 90387]

E.D.TABS

E.D.TABS: Academic Libraries, FY 1988 [Series No. DR-IPEDS-88/89-10.1; NCES No. 90374]

PUBLICATIONS

Public Libraries in Forty-Four States and the District of Columbia, 1988: (Working Paper) [Series No. DR-LIB-88/89-1.1; NCES No. 90388]

FRSS; Services and Resources for Children in Public Libraries [Series No. FRSS-35; NCES No. 90098]

FRSS: The Use of Education Research and Development Resources and Products [Series No. FRSS; NCES No. 90084]

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and libraries have a mutual mission, the collection and dissemination of information in forms and formats that are useful to the diverse publics seeking the information. The unique mission of NCES is to gather statistics in order to report on the condition and progress of all American education. Libraries are valued partners in and beneficiaries of the collection and dissemination of NCES data and products.